



Published by
Health Services Analysis Section
Olympia, WA 98504-4322

PROVIDER BULLETIN

PB 03-09

THIS ISSUE COVERAGE DECISIONS, JANUARY – JUNE 2003

- ERMI Flexionater & Extensionater Devices
- Extracorporeal Shockwave Therapy (ESWT)
- Vacuum Assisted Socket System (VASS)

TO:

Nurses
Nurse Practitioners
Osteopathic Physicians
Physical Therapists
Physician Assistants
Physicians
Prosthetists

CONTACT:

Grace Wang
Office of the Medical Director
PO Box 44321
Olympia WA 98504-4321
360-902-5227
wann235@lni.wa.gov

Provider Toll Free
1-800-848-0811
902-6500 in Olympia

Copyright Information: Many Provider Bulletins contain Physician's Current Procedural Terminology (CPT®) codes. CPT® is a registered trademark of the American Medical Association (AMA). CPT® five-digit codes, descriptions, and other data only are copyright 2001 American Medical Association. All Rights Reserved. No fee schedules, basic units, relative values or related listings are included in CPT®. AMA does not directly or indirectly practice medicine or dispense medical services. AMA assumes no liability for data contained or not contained herein.

Provider Bulletins/Updates are available on the Web at:
http://www.lni.wa.gov/hsa/ProvBulletins/hsa_pbs.htm

Purpose

This Provider Bulletin describes the following decisions:

- Non-coverage of the ERMI Flexionater and the ERMI Extensionater.
- Non-coverage of extracorporeal shockwave therapy for the treatment of musculoskeletal disorders.
- Non-coverage of the Ottobock Vacuum Assisted Socket System.

The Provider Bulletin is currently in effect for State Fund and Self-Insurance claims in all locations.

ERMI Flexionater and Extensionater Devices

What are the Flexionater and Extensionater?

The Flexionater and Extensionater are devices used to address joint stiffness after injury or surgery. They intend to increase range of motion by using patient-controlled load to the joint of concern.

Are the Flexionater and Extensionater covered devices?

The Flexionater and Extensionater are not covered devices due to an absence of published literature addressing efficacy and safety. The Department will revisit the policy if presented with new evidence demonstrating effectiveness.

Extracorporeal Shockwave Therapy for Musculoskeletal Conditions

What is Extracorporeal Shockwave Therapy (ESWT)?

ESWT uses electrohydraulic or electromagnetic technology to generate acoustical shockwaves. ESWT devices are intended to direct the shockwaves at tissues to initiate:

- structural changes on tissue,
- stimulation of bone growth,
- stimulation of the regenerative process in tissue, or
- structural changes in calcium deposits followed by reabsorption of the calcium by the body.

Although the precise mechanism of action is unknown, theories suggest that ESWT may facilitate the neovascularization process, cause a hyperstimulation analgesic effect, or stimulate osteoblast activation.

Is ESWT a covered therapy?

At this time, ESWT is not a covered therapy for ANY indications including:

- 1) plantar fasciitis
- 2) lateral epicondylitis
- 3) shoulder tendinitis
- 4) delayed union of fractures or fracture nonunions

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved ESWT for the treatment of shoulder tendinopathies or fractures. Furthermore, the published literature on ESWT does not substantially show the therapy's effectiveness for treating musculoskeletal conditions.

The Department will continue to monitor peer-reviewed medical literature and will revisit its decision in March 2004.

Otto Bock Vacuum Assisted Socket System

What is the Otto Bock Vacuum Assisted Socket System (VASS)?

The Otto Bock Vacuum Assisted Socket System includes a total surface bearing socket, Urethane interface/liner, sealing sleeves, and a vacuum pump/shock absorber.

The vacuum technology is intended to:

- maintain a balanced volume in an amputee's residual limb
- minimize limb movement in the socket
- facilitate perspiration evaporation within the socket
- reduce friction between the limb, liner, and socket

Is the VASS a covered device?

At this time, VASS is not a covered device. The published literature on VASS does not substantially show the device's effectiveness for maintaining limb volume.

The Department will continue to monitor peer-reviewed medical literature to assess VASS' safety and effectiveness.

Where is more information available?

Contact Grace Wang at wann235@lni.wa.gov or (360) 902-5227 for more information about technology assessments. Assessments are available online at <http://www.lni.wa.gov/omd/MedCov.htm>.

For additional information about fees and billing instructions, see the Medical Aid Rules and Fee Schedules. The information may be found online at www.lni.wa.gov/hsa.